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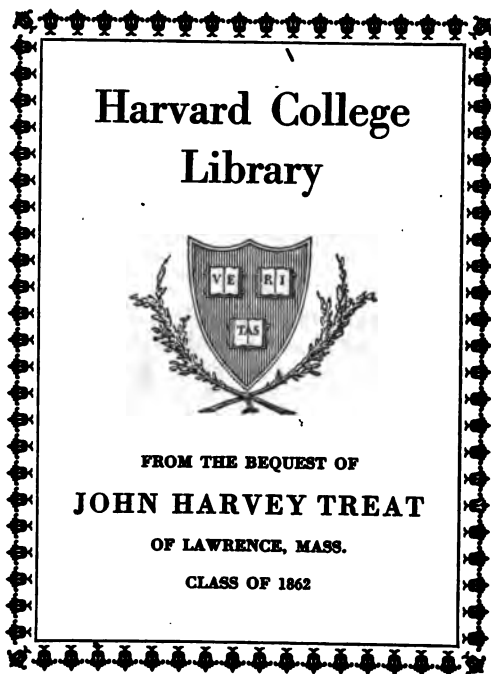
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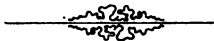
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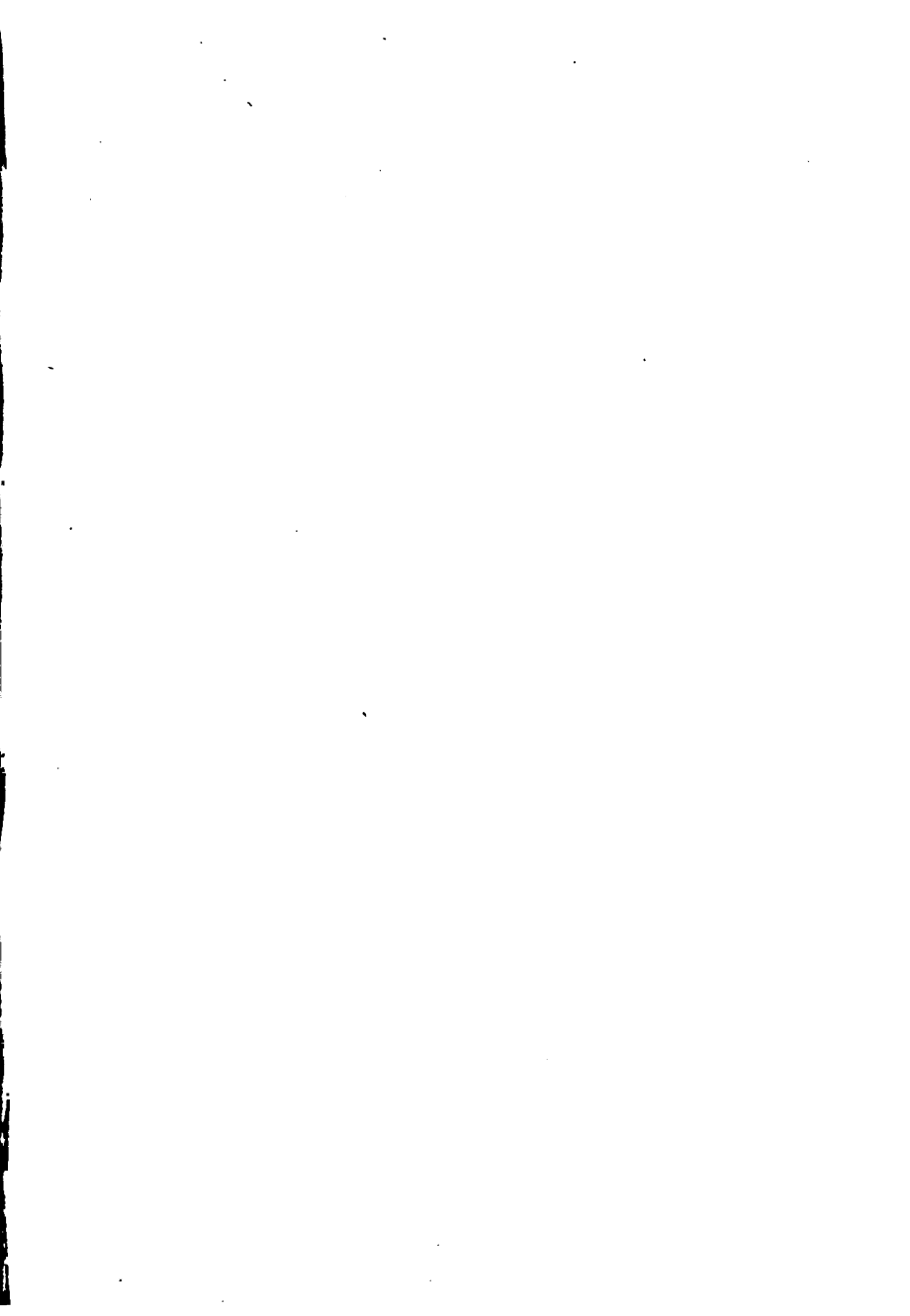
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THE
CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS,

WITH A BRIEF SKETCH

OF THE

HISTORY OF NEWCASTLE,

BY

JOHN McQUILLEN.

("SCRIBER.")

Illustrated.

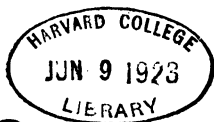
WITH INTRODUCTION BY

The Lord Bishop of Newcastle.

1903.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOHN COCHRANE, SUMMERHILL,
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Treat fluid

PREFACE.

It was no part of the original intention that "St. Nicholas' Cathedral" should exceed the space devoted to the articles of "Among the Churches" series, which for four or five years have been contributed to *Cochrane's Monthly Magazine*. But on beginning to write the sketch, it was found that material was too abundant to be crowded into one part. The second article was written, with a like result. Investigation revealed a rich hoard of fact and history not generally known, and of much interest to every lover of the Metropolis of the North. So the solitary article expanded into six parts, of which this book is composed. The facts and items have been collected from many sources, and with much search and groping among the relics of old time, and are made up from fragments of architecture, scraps of local records, and traditions from the books of worthy men of past generations, who, imbued with the true antiquarian spirit, sought to preserve to posterity the life, manners, and customs of the ancestral stock. Without much originality, but with a sincere desire to revivify the past, the detached and islated references and chaotic atoms have been resolved into consecutive order, and a

consistent story has been compiled of the Mother Church of Newcastle, and of some of the influences and incidents which have gone to the moulding of Novocastrian character and destiny, from the period when the waves of barbarism ebbed and flowed, to the close of the nineteenth century, when law and order prevail.

This opportunity must be taken to acknowledge indebtedness due to those writers who have gone before, and whose pages are filled with the results of original research, without which my work could not have been done. The merit is theirs, the defects are mine; all that I have been able to do is to issue the harvest of their brains in a popular form and at a popular price.

JOHN McQUILLEN.

I, SUMMERHILL TERRACE,
NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

INTRODUCTION.

BENWELL TOWER,

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

The following short history of S. Nicholas' Church first appeared in the columns of a local journal, and aroused such widespread interest that a wish was expressed in many quarters that it should take a more permanent form: and so this little book is published by the author, in the hope that the many who love and reverence the old Church will be glad to have in their possession some notes of its wonderful history. For it is a wonderful history which this and many another old church in our island home can tell of. How proudly they still stand. Grey, strong, beautiful! The glory of our land. Witnesses for the truth. Our forefathers built them: and we, their children, delight to keep them in the beauty of holiness. For the Church is the same to-day as she was in the days of her founding. "One Lord: one Faith: one Baptism."

When the author first asked me to write a few lines of introduction, my thoughts at once went back to a memorable sermon which the great Bishop Lightfoot preached in S. Nicholas', in the octave of the Dedication Services in 1887, in which he claimed for Northumberland, and

proved his claim, that not Rome but Iona was the true cradle of Christianity in England. "Not Augustine but Aidan was the true Apostle." "Iona stepped in where Rome had failed."

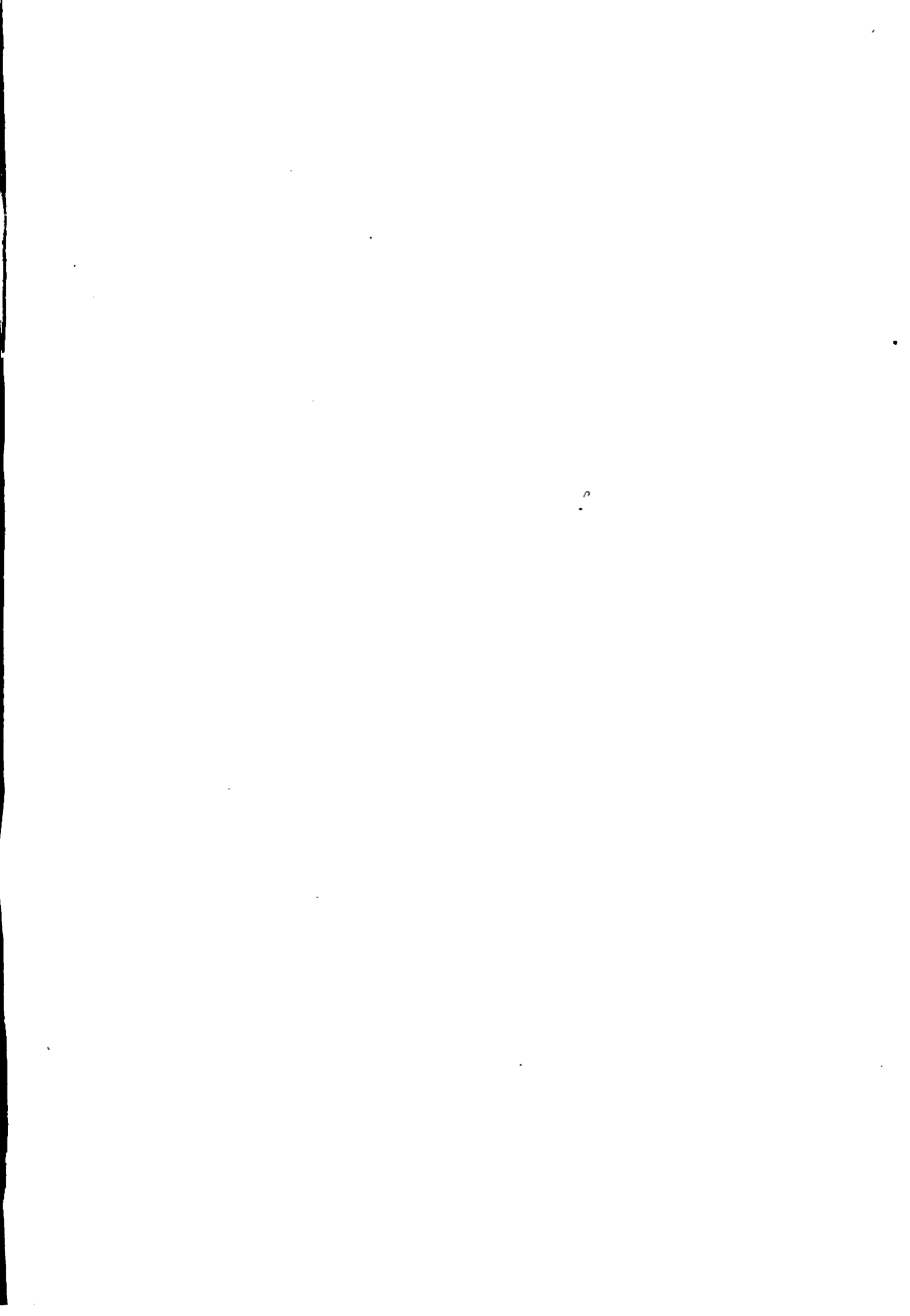
Let me send out on its successful voyage this little history of our dear S. Nicholas', which is enshrined in the history of Northumbria and in the hearts of a multitude of north folk, in the concluding words of the great Bishop already alluded to: "This Diocese of Newcastle still enshrines the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, the true cradle of English Christianity. The building (S. Nicholas') whose completion and adornment we this day celebrate, is in some sense a replacement of the older sanctuary. If it is ever to fulfil its mission, it will become the house of more ornate and frequent services, of a more splendid ritual, but, before all things, the centre of intense missionary and philanthropic work. After all, it was not the splendour, but the simplicity, of Iona and Lindisfarne that won England for Christ. Times are changed. The evangelistic agencies of that age were modelled on the monastic type. None other, as far as we can see, would have done the work so well. Times are changed. Art, music, poetry, architecture, all the choicest adornments of life, which God has given us: these we are bound to render to the service of the Sanctuary, not selfishly keeping our best for our private houses. But while all else changes, the spirit is unchanged. The simplicity, the self devotion, the prayerfulness, the burning love of Christ, which shone forth in those Celtic missionaries of old, must be your spiritual equipment now. Then, when your work is done, and another generation shall have taken your place, it may be that some future Bede will again trace in words of tender and regretful sympathy the undying record of a Christlike life and work."

Nothing can be better than this. And few will deny that S. Nicholas' of to-day, as in the days of old, in its Vicar and his staff of workers, is trying, and that successfully, to hand on unimpaired the legacy of the ages.

Arthur T Newcombe.

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SPEED'S PLAN OF NEWCASTLE 1618.



THE
Church of St. Nicholas,
WITH A BRIEF SKETCH
OF THE
History of Newcastle.

PART I.

HE history of the Church of St. Nicholas is closely interwoven with that of our "North Countrie," and one unlocks the secret of the other. In fact, much of local song and story clusters about the sacred pile—nay! has been acted out under its very shadow. To fully understand its record, we must search among the stricken fields of long ago—must call to life the grim warriors and savage hordes, and the strange priests of a weird, old-world religion. Far back of our civilisation, through the gloom of many centuries, shafts of light fall but rarely and intermittently upon the doings of the makers of the nation. When the banks of the Tyne were peopled by a rude race which fought with nature and wild beasts for a bare existence. When triumph came these rude fore-elders sought the grove on the brow of the hill overlooking the Tyne valley, and worshipped their God in their primitive fashion—perchance on the altar laying the living spoils of

foray and raid. For the Briton of bleak Northumbria was a fierce fighter, and cunning in the art of the spear and the battle-axe, and many of the enemy fell before the rush of his chariot. Silently and swiftly his coracle swept down the river, enabling him to fall on an unsuspecting tribe of Brigantes, which at other times had desolated his home. The hill-top camp was not his home—it lay far away among the moors. The moorland village was the goal when the chase was finished: a village which was but a cluster of fern-thatched huts, surrounded by a ditch and palisaded wall. The *dun* of the tribe was an enclosed stronghold, fortified with a stockade and mud rampart, towards which all tracks centred, and into which, in cases of extremity, wives and children and cattle were driven for shelter. The ancient Briton was skilful with his hands. He wove pliant twigs into many basket forms, and moulded clay into pottery. He had emerged from the stone age, and understood the use of metal, as he fashioned tools for forest work. He raised crops, bred horses, reared cattle, and tended flocks, and with much toil wove a coarse kind of cloth to cover himself. His language may still be traced in Wales; and up and down the country, in desolate and melancholy places, are mysterious groups and circles of stone—gigantic monoliths of uncanny interest—where religious rites were observed. On the upper reaches of the Tyne, and by the banks of the Reed Water, the Ottadina lay and dreamed of future conquests. As with many dreams of modern days, that of the Northerner was rudely broken. Rome had heard of his lands, and, lusting for further wealth and dominion, she, proud mistress of half a world, sent forth her cohorts to do battle with the hardy Briton. Despite the bravest and most desperate resistance, barbaric heroism was no match for the trained legions of civilisation. The native was driven from hill

to dale, from stockade to cave, until the last stand was made, and he fell, beaten, but not ingloriously. His sacred grove was destroyed. The temple, built under the impulse of a great system of faith, based on spiritual aspirations, was cast down, and his priests perished by the sword, and his hopes and longings mingled with the dust.

Though degraded by the fortunes of war, the local spirit was strong. Experience was a severe taskmaster. Imperialism had many lessons to teach, but the Briton was apt to learn, and he quickly assimilated many of the arts and qualities of his mentor. He haunted the scenes of his former power, waiting for the hour to strike when his opportunity should come again. The whirligig of time brings many changes. Where the Briton had fortified his hill and planted his oak—for religion was never far from the camp fires of the race—where the Druid had practised the weird rites of a worship which was not now the reflection of a religion, but its afterglow—the Roman set up his station and his gods, strange and many, which were familiar to his pagan soul. Of temples he had few. It may be on the very site where the mother church of the city now stands he built an altar to the deity of his family. The faith of the Roman was a mere matter of habit. He had drifted into his father's idolatry. His ceremonies were performed with due regard to ritual, but the spirit was gone. The age was in reality one of superstition and atheism. The twilight of the Roman Empire had set in; soon the dusk would follow. Gods, goddesses, and priests were still outwardly honoured; but their influence was spent. This puny religion was grafted on the old Druidic stock, and for a space showed signs of vitality. An old faith is never torn up by the roots. There is ever a principle which is perpetuated. The sap of primitive religion survives even to these latter days.

In the year 80, Agricola wintered at the North-country station, and planned the line of forts which was to extend from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway Firth, and in the succeeding years had them erected, to guard his acquisitions from the Picts and Scots. To the forts, in 120, Hadrian added earthworks, which formed a more effective barrier against the playfulness of the hardy mountaineers. During his sojourn in the district, Hadrian saw the advantages of the position; built a bridge across the Tyne, and laid a military road leading on to Watling Street, by way of Chester-in-the-Street. Pons Ælii now became a place of considerable importance. From evidence which has been unearthed near the cathedral site, we learn that scholars came from afar, to teach their lore and those arts which civilise and dignify human existence. The Romanised Briton laid aside his warlike weapons, and gave himself to industry and domestic habits and social instincts. Under the new conditions, the Briton developed amazingly. Civilisation brought needs and wants not felt before. By the newly-made roads traders came from distant parts, and found a ready market for their merchandise. The painted body and animal skins were replaced by garments more in harmony with the times. The Roman station became a populous centre. Huts of wattle and daub sprang up. The land was cultivated; cattle grazed upon the river slopes; and when the Romans, enervated by a lazy life, gave up the occupation of the camp, the Britons were in every way equal to the duties which devolved upon them.

The prosperous state of Pons Ælii attracted the attention of the hereditary enemies, and brought about a desire to participate in the good things. They would not be said nay. Neither mile castle nor stone wall could keep them out. They would not be denied.

The Saxons were invited to assist in repelling the invaders.

This they did successfully; but, pirates as they were, they turned upon the Britons, and slaughtered ruthlessly to the point of extermination. The town was levelled to the ground, and the work of long years undone. A few fugitives who escaped became moorland wanderers, and, doubtless, reverted to the early tribal life. Their history became a tradition, and the once smiling town a family vault, over which gloom rested for two long centuries.

In 547, the scattered Britons were gathered together, and reunited, to dispute the landing of Ida, with a strong horde of Angles behind him. Bravely, and with resolute determination, the hardy natives hurled themselves against the invaders; but time after time they were repulsed, and finally dispersed. Ida succeeded in building the Bamburgh fortress, and also in gaining more than a foothold upon the land, upon which he made a deep impression. Saxon habits, customs, and religion were introduced to such Britons as remained. The social aspects were entirely changed. Temples were built—for these men from across the seas loved their gods—

“And by the roadside
Made them offerings,
And upon high hills;”

and to this day the days of the week are saint-days to their memories. The worship may have been barbaric and sensual; but it was the worship of rude, strong men, in whose veins throbbed the fire of gods, and whose lives reeked with the smoke and blood of battle. In those stirring, warlike times, there was little or no room for lofty conceptions of divine things. They dealt with elements; and their thoughts and deeds were shaped accordingly.

So surely did the Saxon do his work; so congenial was the material, that his language is ours; and the fair faces

we love trace their beauty back to him, and Britain is no longer Britain, but Angle-land, and the Briton who would not conform was driven from his native heath forever.

The energetic Saxons spread over the conquered territory, reclaiming wastes, and adapting such places as were left to new uses. Forts were restored and occupied: sanctuaries were rebuilt, to appease the gods. Plentiful sacrifices of animals were offered to them, and human beings were not spared on occasions of great importance. Near every gathering place of a tribe stood a stone of sacrifice, on which the necks of the victims were crushed and broken, and the holy pool, in which another kind of human sacrifice was sunk. There were great feasts—religious in their character—held frequently. At these the people gathered round the smoking caldron, in which the sacrificial animals were boiled, and partook of the flesh. The feasts ended with much drinking, and cups were drained in honour of the gods—first to Woden, for strength and victory; second, to Freye, for peace and good harvest, and so on, the last bowl being drunk in honour of the dead. Under Saxon rule towns were inhabited, and the value of the fortified position of Pons Ælii was specially recognised. Its defences were strengthened, and a royal residence was built at Pandon. The name of the town was changed to Ad Murum.

About this date—620—the air became charged with spiritual electricity. A new religion, known as Christianity, was working wonders in the world. Its missionaries had long been in the south and in the north; and indeed had had ventured into savage Northumbria, or Bernicia. as it was called, for Paulinus accompanied Ethelburg, Edwin's Christian wife, to her husband's court, to protect her from pagan influences. Bishop Paulinus spent some time at Ad-gefrin, or Yevinger, and succeeded in converting sundry

heathen, whom he baptised in the river Glen. Pallinsburn and Holystone, on the Coquet, are memorials of his name and fame. Edwin, the first Christian king, became such through Paulinus; but only after much hesitation and Providential interference. It was to him that the ancient thane addressed his words when he said: "I will tell thee, O King, what methinks man's life is like. Sometimes, when the hall is lit up for supper on a wild winter's night, and warmed by a fire in the midst, a sparrow flies in at one door, takes shelter for a moment in the warmth, and then flies out again by another door, and is lost in the stormy darkness. No one sees the bird before it enters, nor after it has gone forth: so as to the brief span of our life in this world—what has gone before it, what will come after it, of this we know nothing, If the strange teacher can tell us, let him be heard."

When Oswald, the Beloved of God, succeeded to the throne, the few seeds scattered from Rome by Paulinus were wellnigh dead. There were neither God-worshippers nor Christ-worshippers between the Tyne and the Tweed. Oswald signalised his power by the battle of Hexham, and Hexham Abbey, then called Heavenfield, was erected by him, on the site where he had placed a wooden cross prior to the battle. Here then was the first symbol of Christianity raised. Oswald, distressed by the barbarous state of his kingdom, sent a message to the Island of Waves—Iona—where there were men who walked with God: men of missionary zeal and spirit, who when they heard of the bleak, forsaken land by the North Sea, were at once ready to give it their earnest attention. The first missionary preacher was a severe man, lacking in temper and judgment. He found the Northumbrians a peculiar race, of whom he could make nothing. They were utterly bad and beyond hope, so he left them to their ways of sin. But there came

a wiser and more politic successor, St. Aidan. Truly, the Northumbrians were uncivilised and of a barbarous disposition; but they were amenable to treatment. Pope Gregory did not approve of St. Aidan's ordination. He would rather have had one of his own communion and nomination. Lindisfarne was made the centre of Aidan's ministry, and the episcopal residence. For fifteen years St. Aidan laboured vigorously, until he got thousands to listen to his words. He assailed the pagan stronghold, gained the ear of the people; and, after a strenuous ministry, which ended in 651, succeeded in establishing the first principles of the Christian religion. Under the impetus thus given, churches and chapels were built; and, for the shelter of those fearful of persecution, and for the training of native missionaries, religious houses were founded, which, for a long time, did useful work. The type of Christian, as might be inferred, was not of the highest. In times of stress, he often fell back on his old charms and amulets; and had more faith in his gods than in God. Through turbulence and tribulation, the Gospel won its way, converting the heathen, and creating the martyr spirit.

The lustre of St. Aidan's fame was somewhat dimmed by the great light of St. Cuthbert, who, in 664, left Melrose, and became Prior of Lindisfarne, where he lived a life of severe austerity and faithful devotion to his mission. After twelve years at Lindisfarne, he withdrew from the monastery, and for nine years lived as a hermit in a rude cell of unhewn stones and turf, which he built for himself on the island of Farne. In 685, by the choice of the King and people of Northumbria, St. Cuthbert became Bishop of Hexham, which in the same year he exchanged for the see of Lindisfarne. Only two years he held this office; but they were years of arduous labour. He visited the wildest parts of his diocese to preach to the people, still semi-



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heathen. Finally, finding that his end was approaching, he returned to his solitary place, and died, in 687. He was buried at Lindisfarne, but found his final resting place at Durham, "where his Cathedral, great and vast, looks down upon the Wear." Three hundred years after his death, when the seat of the Bishops of Northumbria was moved from Lindisfarne, Chester-le-Street was the place chosen; and in 995 the Anglican see of the North was established. St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert are saints who had visions of God, because of the purity of their souls; and, having seen God, they glorified Him by leading others to His presence.

Not to Rome, but to Iona and Lindisfarne, was the foundation of the faith due, though the supremacy of Rome was afterwards acknowledged.

Once more a storm centre developed, with startling rapidity. Ad Murum had taken to the ways of civilised life. Buildings clustered round about the old Roman castle, and the town had gained a reputation for sanctity. Many monks and nuns resided within its borders, and pursued their studies and did their good works; but Halfden, a Danish chief, entered the Tyne, and wintered here, spreading death and destruction on every hand. Tynemouth, Jarrow, Lindisfarne, and Wearmouth suffered in turn. The sacred edifices were cast down, and the holy men and women were slain without mercy; and in our town matters were in as sore a plight. The cruel spirit of war wrought its deeds of pillage and death, and left the erewhile flourishing town a heap of ruins: a state from which there was no recovery for a wide interval of years.

Ad Murum, though spoken of as one place, in reality embraced two distinct and separate viles or towns—Pons Ælii and Pampedone or Pandon—and they remained separate, and were described so, until Edward I. united them by charter. Wallsend, Walbottle, and Benwall have severally

been identified as Ad Murum; but Wallknowle without a doubt is the place entitled to the honour. Pandon had for long been a *vicus*, or village, with a settled population; and was described by an ancient historian as "a little fisher-town." There were numerous fisheries on the Tyne at this period. It is reckoned that 500 or 600 men would be employed within the flow of the tide.

When Ad Murum became identified with monastic life, its name was changed once more; and it was known as Monkchester—the fortified home of the monks. Not that its fortifications availed much, as we have seen, when the Danes made their depredatory incursion. The fame of its peculiar sanctity spread abroad, and lingered long in the land, as an inspiration to other generations.



PART II.

FAR back in early records, we read of Aldwine, prior and monk of Winchelsea, who, in pursuing his studies of ancient manuscripts and muniments, found that Northumberland, and especially Monkchester, was famed for its sacred edifices and its strong Christian colony. Being of an inquiring turn of mind, he set forth, with two adventurous spirits like himself, to learn the truth. He entered on the pilgrimage with an ass bearing the holy vestments and precious books; and after passing through great dangers, and enduring much hardship, he arrived, only to find to his dismay scarce a vestige of the early Christian settlement. The place was the embodiment of misery: a few wretched inhabitants living in deplorable hovels among the rankness and ruin alongside the Roman Wall. This was no centre for him. He proceeded to Jarrow, and there rekindled the enthusiasm for monastic life and labours.

The recuperative powers of the town must have been strong—or was it the situation—for it had undergone the throes of reconstruction again, but only to meet with its old fate once more. In 1068, the Normans, to prevent the town from becoming a refuge for Duke William's enemies,

laid it waste and put its unhappy people to the sword. The site was literally a battleground for contending forces; but, even over this dark foreground, a bright horizon was shining—a day would dawn when there would be settled peace, when industry and commerce would pursue their ways undisturbed by the clash of arms—but it was not yet.

Robert Curthose, the Conqueror's eldest son, built the castle to which our Newcastle owes its name; and henceforth, through many vicissitudes, the town has had a continuous existence and history. Rufus enclosed the town, which now extended a goodly distance beyond the Roman wall, with substantial walls, fortified and protected by towers, the whole being garrisoned by fighting men.

Holy and pious men and women, attracted by the security of the stronghold, took up their abode and worked their airy dreams into solid realities. Christianity found a permanent home from whence it could direct its operations and influences—among which was the building of religious houses and churches. In 1091, the fourth year of William Rufus, the Church of St. Nicholas was founded by Osmond, Bishop of Salisbury—not the building that now exists or even its immediate predecessor, but an earlier church, of which not a relic is extant. It was at this period that an extraordinary wave of religious enthusiasm broke over the country. Wherever the Norman went he identified himself with the erection of ecclesiastical buildings on a big scale. Churches rose in every village, and monasteries in towns and cities, built after a style unknown before. The country was flourishing—with renovated rites and worship, bishopric after bishopric was founded. It was an age of holy enterprises and large-hearted philanthropy. Men lived, moved, and had their being in a religious atmosphere. It permeated the national life, and gave colour and form to its thought. The first Crusade was undertaken. Crowds of pilgrims,

under the sanction of Pope Urban II., travelled to the East, in search of the Holy City. That the Crusade ended disastrously does not alter the fact. The ferment was in the air, and Newcastle was within the zone, and became rich in hallowed places. Sons of the Church came from far and near, and with their coming arose new religious developments, suitable to the needs of the town. The sounds of revelry and the wild tales of plunder and slaughter were hushed, for the sea rovers had ceased from troubling. Instead, was heard the chanting of joyful hymns, and the recital of pathetic litanies. From their quiet cells the monks looked forth upon the movement of life, and some there were, who, not content with solitary prayer, fasting, and midnight vigil, entered into the strife, and sought to ameliorate the lot and condition of their fellow men. Thus we find them, in their symbolical garments, standing in the narrow streets near the Castle, where the country people who have come in for market or festival have gathered, and here they chant the sacred songs of Cædmon, the Saxon version of the creed, and the Te Deum. Many there are who pause to listen, and when the music ceases the thoughtful ask questions and wait to hear the Saxon gospels read. The results are encouraging. Knots of simple people follow the Evangelists of the Cross to an edifice sacred to the cause they represent. The human heart, tired of dumb gods and dreary negatives, turns longingly to the promises of better things, and yields to the power of the gracious ministry.

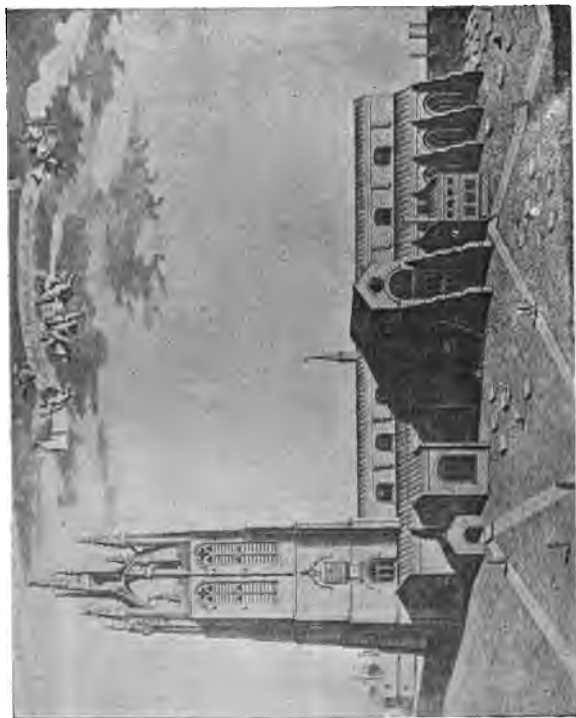
Wishing to participate in the active religious revival, monks of various orders flock to the town, and erect their different houses. Early we find mention of the Nunnery of St. Bartholomew, where a band of noble women laboured to overthrow pagan superstitions and practices. Then came the Black Friars, and the Friars of the Sac, the White

Friars, and the Austin Friars; each of whom set up a monastic institution, and endeavoured to advance the social and spiritual welfare of the town. No wonder Newcastle became fragrant, not with the memories of past years, but with the sanctity of holy lives, which have left a great illumination on the pages of bygone records.

Of the evolutionary stages of the Mother Church—from pagan temple to Saxon wooden chapel, and to the more imposing structure of later centuries—history is silent, and events are but vaguely discernible in the misty dawn. Much must be guessed at and taken for granted. From a stray pillar in the north arcade of the present nave—from a few square yards of surviving wall, incorporated with building of more recent years—the old Church of Saint Nicholas has to be pieced together. This is a task for more skilful hands.

Between 1115 and 1128, Henry I., by royal charter, granted to God and to St. Mary of Carlisle, and to the canons of that place, the church of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and other churches. The prior and convent of Carlisle, and afterwards the convent and bishop jointly, were rectors of the church till the Reformation. At that time the presentation was vested in the Bishop of Carlisle, with whom it remained till a recent date.

In the middle of the twelfth century, early chronicles assure us that the builders were at work on the sacred edifice, stamping their individuality upon the stones so deeply that men of the nineteenth century have read the characteristics of their work. In 1216, fire was responsible for yet another destruction, and for a long time the church lay in ruins; but, in 1350, we find St. Nicholas' again assuming form and beauty, and becoming an object-lesson to the burghers and craftsmen who lived under its shadow, in the crooked but picturesque streets which radiated



ST. NICHOLAS' IN 1715.

from its precincts. Great dreams were formulating in the national mind. The sublimest thought, next to that of God, was realising slowly but gradually. Liberty, long denied, was now admitted. Henry III. granted representative Parliament and its consequent privileges. Conditions of local life were also more favourable. The burgesses, being charged with the defence of the place in which they lived, were in return for their military services entitled to certain rights and immunities. A year's residence within the walls gave an incomer these privileges. "Burgess" is derived from the Saxon "burg"—a village or fortified town. "To find the origin of burgesses," says Collier, in his "Essays on Charters," "we need but step back five hundred years, and fancy ourselves one of our predecessors, possessed of a timber-built house, wattled with hazel rods, daubed over with hay and chopped straw—one storey high, or if more, the upper one like a pigeon loft, with a loophole to peep out at every morning, to see if the Scots or mosstroopers were not in the streets before they durst open the door. If we step in, we may readily fancy an old sire, with his grey beard and whiskers, gravely weaving a web, and the old dame making cloth bonnets and hose—contented with her work, though it is miserably botched, owing to her failing sight. She sits mumbling her paternoster, while barefooted youngers sit cruddleing in a heap round a fire made on the hearth in the middle of the house, listening to legends of monks, witches, and hobgoblins. A yew bow the length of a man, a quiver of arrows a full cloth yard long, a broad sword, and a bit of mail are crowded into a corner." This is the burgher's house, and these are his means of keeping it. A year's undisputed possession of land constitutes a valid title. The son has the same advantages as his father—liberty to grind corn and bake bread for home use, and immunity from the servile and degrad-

ing exactions to which the peasantry of the country are subject, exemption from the jurisdiction of courts beyond the borough, the non-existence of the wager of battle except on a charge of treason, and the limitation of pecuniary penalties. By these glimpses of other days, we form more or less complete pictures of the manner of life the freemen of Newcastle lived.

St. Nicholas', as completed in 1350, had no steeple; only a square, battlemented tower, similar to that of Durham Cathedral. Robert Rhodes, however—the good genius of local churches in after years—determined that the building should not remain dwarfed. He added the world-famed steeple, which was an architectural triumph, a creation of artistic beauty, a veritable dream in stone, a work of singular grace and elegance, and an enduring monument to his name.

St. Nicholas' Church became an important place. Persons who had turned penitent, and had duly confessed their sins, were advised, for the sake of prayer, devotion, and pilgrimage, to resort to this church on the feast day of its patron saint and on other saint days, there to work out the physical plan of salvation. Barefooted, and covered with sackcloth, they would march round the graveyard, and prostrate themselves on the threshold of the church, into which they were led, chanting penitential psalms: it may be afterwards to wend their way up Pilgrim Street to the shrine of Our Lady at Jesmond, to further make amends for the evils of past days. All such were entitled to an indulgence over forty days, and likewise those who assisted in the reparation of the church.

In 1280, the travelling judges held their courts in the church.

The general attitude of the nation to ecclesiastical establishments at this time was such that the possessions of the

clergy increased daily, and swelled to such enormous bulk that the whole lands of the kingdom were threatened. The barons consecrated their great wealth to the Church and her institutions. Nine great cathedrals were built, and one hundred and fifty abbeys, priories, and other religious houses, as outlets for the vast resources of the treasury.

In Newcastle the cause was well supported by rich and poor alike. There were many benefactors who remembered the mother church in their days of plenty, and added to its beauty and usefulness. We read in ancient record of how the Coopers' Company devoted their fines to "Sancto Nicholas' kyrke warke;" and in an ordinary of the Barber-Surgeons' and Chandlers' Company, dated 10th Oct., 1442, we read that they are to "uphold the light of St John the Baptist in St. Nicholas' Church as long as they are of ability."

It was the custom of the age for well-to-do people to gift small chapels or side aisles to their parish churches, designed to be the family burying places. St. Nicholas' surpassed all other churches in the north, both in the number and in the richness of its chantries, having ten, where prayers for the dead and for the welfare of the living might be said from time to time.

The parochial authorities in olden days possessed great powers over their flocks. We read of two serving wenches venturing to Durham, and approaching the shrine of St. Cuthbert, who had a whole-souled antipathy to women when alive, and even after his death none of the sex was allowed near the altars where his body had rested. To accomplish this bold and impious deed, the girls donned men's attire, but were detected in the act and sent back to Newcastle in disgrace to do penance at St. Nicholas'. In 1312, we find that one Nicholas Porter was found guilty of a breach of the rights of sanctuary, and was sentenced

to stand at the door of St. Nicholas' Church, bare-footed, bare-headed, and clad only in a linen gown, and there in the presence of all the people declare his offence in the vulgar tongue, admit the justice of his punishment and receive a fustigation at the hands of the parish chaplain; and then he had to proceed to the Monastery of the Carmelites, where his sacrilege was committed, and repeat his confession and receive a similar whipping. At Whitsuntide, on three separate days, he must undergo the same penance at Durham.

In 1400, Newcastle was made a town and county in itself. Its population was steadily increasing, and the streets and institutions had long since straggled out beyond the walls of the eleventh century. To protect the town another great work was undertaken: a greatly enlarged area was encircled by a magnificent wall, over two miles in extent, and varying from twelve to twenty feet high. The task of defending these fortifications was distributed over the four-and-twenty wards of the town, each ward being responsible for a specified section.

Newcastle had now reached the height of her medieval splendour, and the climax of her prosperity was fittingly marked by an event which evidenced the humiliation of her ancient enemy. It was a great day in the town, when, after the battle of Halidon Hill, Edward Baliol did homage to the English king for the crown and kingdom of Scotland, in the church of the Black Friars.

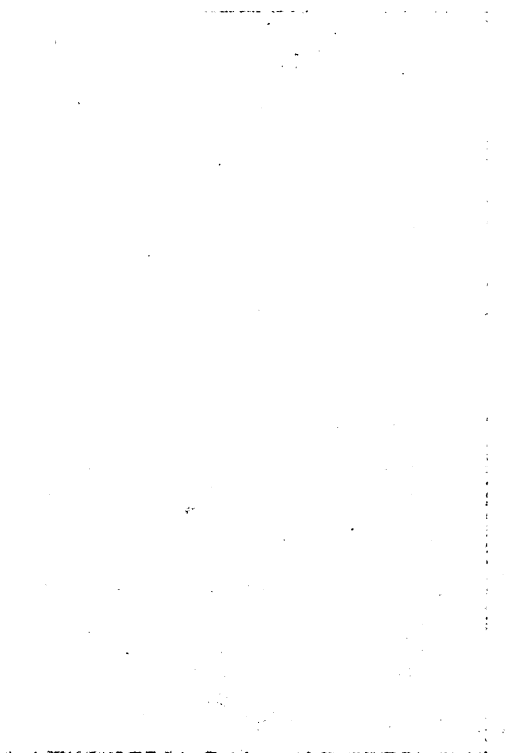
As the Church waxed rich in increments, grave abuses crept in. High privileges were scandalously neglected, and responsibilities shirked. Men sought the garb of sanctity, not for piety, but for the luxury and licence it conferred. There was an unholy traffic with lust and gluttony under the guise of religious austerity, and foul damage was wrought in the Church's fair reputation. In many churches

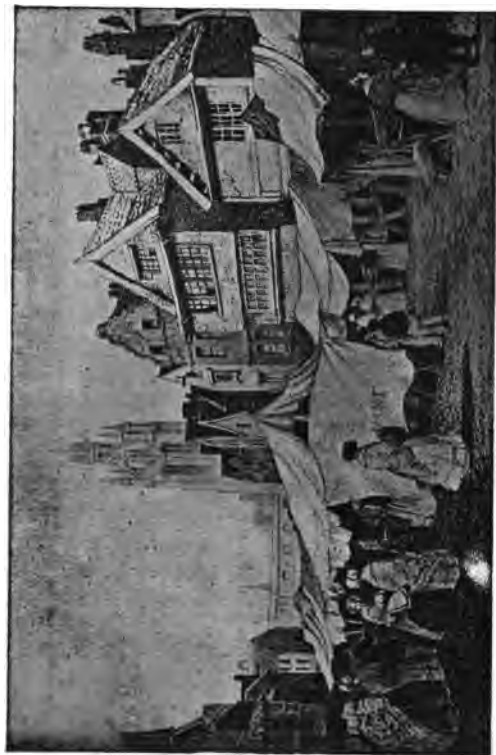
there were no sermons—not one in seven years, and some not one in twelve years. Some had neither parson, vicar, nor curate, only sorry readers. But Nemesis was at hand. A bill was introduced in Parliament to secure the ecclesiastical wealth for the royal purse. Now this same bill was much noted and feared amongst the religious sort, “whom in effect it mightily touched and unhinged; inso-much that the fat abbots did sweat after a profuse sort, the proud priors frowned, the poor friars cursed, and the silly nuns wept, and altogether were nothing pleased nor content. The very existence of Holy Church was threatened like as by a foul and filthy plague.” Fortunately a war with France intervened, and the fat slumbers of the Church remained undisturbed till another Henry reigned.



PART III.

N olden days the men of Newcastell were of a strenuous sort: bound together by ties of blood and also by ties stronger. They had striven shoulder to shoulder against local and national enemies. Their defeats and victories—their sorrows and joys—were shared in common. Thus, the bonds were of life-long growth; and, besides, in religion they were not divided. They loved “ye olde popish doctrine,” and lived simple and self-denying lives, devoted to charity—to the care of the poor and sick. Among the burghers especially, coin and kind were held almost solely in trust to be used for the general good. A religious attitude, generated by a united faith, pervaded society. Men loved the church. They had lavished their money and their labour upon its erection: they would not neglect its services. In the grey morning light, worshippers would be seen meekly wending their way through Spurrier-gate and Sadler-gate—from the Bigg Market on the one hand, from Flesher Raw and Baillye-gate on the other, and from alleys, lanes, and chares innumerable, at the hour of six, to be in time for prime. Tierce came later, before mass, at nine o’clock. Then, after mass, sext at noon, and nones at three o’clock, winding up the day’s





THE FLESH MARKET.

devotions with evening vespers. For long the clergy held service in the night, to which sturdy men and women, in their quaint garbs, lantern in hand, trudged, thinking it no mean privilege to take part in a solemn service. They were incorrigibly religious—worship was the articulated expression of their faith. As in the past, heroic living and religious devotion could not avert the red hand of war, so in the present the operation of natural laws could not be stayed. In 1317, the town was smitten with a grievous famine and mortality—insomuch that the quick could hardly bury the dead. There was a great corruption of cattle and grass. Some ate the flesh of their own children, and thieves in prison devoured those who were recently brought in, and greedily ate them half alive. Walsingham says: "Wheat rose to $\text{£}6$ per quarter. Men's wages in those days rarely exceeded twopence per day."

Besides guarding the spiritual interests of the people, the Church was responsible for their amusement; and on certain days the building became the theatre of noisy and grotesque scenes—occasions renowned under the style of the Feast of Fools, when mysteries and miracle plays were performed—as Purification, Noah's Ark, Adam and Eve, etc. The boy bishop was elected annually on St. Nicholas' Day. The clergy encouraged these productions, to displace the profane mummeries of the fairs. At first monks assumed the characters, and took charge of the representations; but later the Incorporated Companies looked upon them as their special right and privilege. On the festival of Corpus Christi, the guilds would observe a gala day, and would assemble in some prominent place like St. Nicholas' Churchyard; and then after attending service would march in procession and parade through the town, each craft wearing its special livery, and bearing the em-

blem of its calling and the banner of its patron saint. The rest of the day was devoted to the election of officials; feasting and the performance of plays commenced, which was a source of amusement and instruction to Newcastle folks. They were introduced by pilgrims from the Holy Land, abolished by Henry VIII., and revived temporarily by Queen Mary.

St. Nicholas was the patron saint of sailors. "At the north door," says an ancient authority, "it is observable that the large flagg which is the first step into the church, is cut all along the surface with uneven lines in imitation of the waves of the sea." This is the silent remembrancer of the saint to whom the church is dedicated.

At this period the Catholic religion was universal. Men might be divided politically, yet be at one—knit by this bond of the middle ages, which was sealed by royalty, laws, customs, literature, and art. But the stream of tendency was flowing towards a climax. The development was progressive. The clergy should have been the direct moral teachers and leaders of the nation, for the sacerdotal class was undoubtedly potent. A word to the people, and they would have gone forward on clearly defined lines. The word was spoken, but the voice was not Esau's. As we have seen, the sacred offices were abused, and opportunities allowed to slip. The birthright was sold.

Brand tells us that Wickliff, the famous reformer, was in Newcastle during the fourteenth century, and it may well be that he left the taint of heresy behind which altered the fixed ideas in the popular mind, and which became virile as the ages went on, and changed the whole destiny of the country. Doctrines are simply the seeds of great spiritual truths. Religion is a constituent element of man's nature. Its demonstrations are various.

Catholicism, with its services and festivals, its ritual and

its spectacles, was religion materialised, and this could not for long satisfy the instincts of human nature. Homage to the Virgin appealed to the mysterious cravings and affections of women's hearts. In her exaltation, in some vague fashion, was prophesied their own emancipation. Their chains were breaking at her shrine. The Virgin Mother, in the highest sense, was the New Woman in those dark far-off days.

In 1503, England and Scotland drew together in friendship. Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., was affianced to James IV. of Scotland. The princess, with a splendid retinue, paid a visit to Newcastle. "She was met on the Tyne Bryge by the mayr of the Towne, accompanied by the scheryffe and aldermen, well apoynted, on foot. The which received the said Qwene honourably, and after the receyvyng the said mayr monted on horsebak, beryng his masse before hyr. At the bryge end, upon the gett, war many children, revested of surpeliz, syngyng mellodiously hymnes and playing on instruments of many sortes. Within the said towne, by ordres, the burges and habitants were honestly apoynted. The stretts was hanged, and the window loupes, toppes, and schypes was so full of people, gentylmen and gentylwomen, in so great nombre, that it was a playsir for to se. But they made non sound of artyllery and ordinance. In such statt and fayr aray was the said Qwene brought and conveyed to the Freres Austyns, where she was lodged and honestly receyved by those revested with the crosse, in the manner as it is rehersed befor. And when she was brought to hyr lodgyng every man drew him to hys awn. The next day after, being the XXVth day of the said monneth, Saunt Jamys day, she abode all the day in the said towne, and was at the church masse, very nobly accompanied." It was the mother church that the fair princess graced with her pre-

sence. If within its grim grey walls she dreamed of peace, the illusion was rudely dispelled. War, not peace, was the normal state and condition of the age. Besides the brave show of retinue and royalty, Newcastle often witnessed the mustering of the king's army before setting out for the battles of the north. The market place, the town wastes, and the narrow streets would be crowded by fighting men and their followers, with their ready horses, brave apparel, armour, and weapons—a motley, jangling and picturesque throng; hardly so well-behaved as they should be, for we read that a “newe pair of galloves were set up in the market place, and sowldiers were hanged for quarrelling and fighting.” The army camped in a place called “Shellfelde.”

In 1513, the body of James IV. was sent from Flodden Field via Berwick, and was deposited in the Church of St. Nicholas, where his affianced bride had worshipped on her way to the Scottish court. Thus does Time reverse the order of things, and break in on the dreams of mortals. The cortege passed on to the south.

About this date the population of Newcastle would be, judging from the capitation tax granted to Richard II. by Parliament in 1377, slightly over 5,000. The tax was fourpence for every lay person of either sex above fourteen years of age. Out of 3,970 inhabitants in the above reign, 2,647 were taxable. In the middle of the sixteenth century, there were in the town 1,714 able men, whereof “furnished with harness and hors archers 27, byllmen 23.”

It is curious to note how the town cared for those bereft of reason. “Paid Dame Clarke for keeping Allon the Foole, xijd.” “Paid for cowlinge of Bartye Allison the Foole, this year, xvjd.” “Allon, *Foole*, a long cote.” “Thomas Dodds, *Foole*, a petticote.” “Paid to John Lawson, *Foole*, towards mendinge of his sore legg, xijd.”

And that these poor sense-bound mortals might have cause to remember the birth of the Holy Child a payment is recorded "for vij yardes of *yalowe carsage* and vij yardes of *blewe carsage* for the fulles cottes and cappes agaynste Christymas." The collective humanity of church, corporation, and individual was taxed to the utmost when the plague broke out and decimated the population. The Angel of Death tarried at every door, and claimed entire families as its victims. Trenches were filled with the uncoffined dead, and even with the dying. A reign of terror existed. The shadow of the Almighty was on the town, and men were smitten by the immediate energy of God—for the plague was regarded as a mysterious visitation of Providence. To prevent the spread of the contagion, fumigations of pitch, resin, and frankincense were used. All trade was at a stand; and there is a tradition that the streets of Newcastle were covered with grass, and the highways were unoccupied. A famine was only averted by the action of the magistrates. True enough, the plague was a dispensation of Providence. Nature, one of the manifestations of God, was avenging the neglect of her primary laws, and enforcing her stern lessons on the first principles of sanitation. Oftimes great truths are only recognised through severe trial and suffering.

Mention has been made of the paternal interest taken by the Church and Corporation in the spiritual and bodily welfare of the people. Perhaps this interest was never pushed farther than when it was sought to regulate the price of the clothing of apprentices. Cloth at 10/- per yard, and fustian at 3/- or under; and they were not to "wear any velvat or lace on their apparell, neither any silke garters" or other effeminate decorations, which are enumerated. Another sumptuary byelaw was to the effect that every youth should "cutt his haire from the crowne

of his heade, keepe his foreheade bare, his lokes, if any, shall not reach below the lap of his eare, and the same length be observed behind, and if in caise any be sicke, he shall weare a linnen cappe and no other, and that without laice." The make and material of clothes, boots, etc., and habits, were also subject to law. The rebellious were punished by imprisonment in a gaol set apart at West Gate, the keeper of which was paid 40s. per annum. "The lads had their haire cutt in courtt, a dish being used, by the edge of which the haire was rounded off. The prison diet was twopence in bread and one quart of table beare daily." After a few days' solitary confinement, they gladly conformed to the dictates of those in authority.

Thomas Swan was summoned for jeering at some of the apprentices whose hair was cut according to pattern, and calling them "The Company's Cowed Tupps."

Queen Elizabeth, in the March of 1529, granted a charter to the mayor and burgesses of Newcastle. This, which is the *Great Charter*, and constitutes the basis of the local constitution, was secured at a cost of £634 10s. Feudalism was long since dead. Numbers of the lords of the soil had followed the banner of the Cross to distant lands, from whence they never returned, and nothing stood in the way to block the progress of civil and religious freedom or the development of the life of the community. Certainly, the walled town was the fatherland, and its limits the horizon of these local patriots. "Canny Newcassel" was the pride of the north, but its influence could not be confined even by ramparts or jealous egotism. And all this accumulation of influences and interests and tendencies was subject to the Mother Church, for all were included within the boundaries of the vicarage of St. Nicholas, which contains five distinct and in every way independent parishes—viz., St. Nicholas, All Saints, St. Andrew, St. John, and Gosforth.

The parish of St. Nicholas dates back to a very remote period, and was one of the first foundations. On account of its extent, it was cantoned out as wealth and population increased. By ancient ritual, the administration of baptism and the rite of burial formed the distinctive mark of a church fully consecrated—if there were a font and burial place, in point of law, there was a church.

If the age is great, so was the extent of this original parish, extending from St. Anthony's by Walker to Gosforth, thence across country to Throckley Fell and on to Denton Burn and to the river by Scotswood, and then by the waterside to St. Anthony's. The whole district might have with strict fitness been called St. Nicholas.

In April, 1617, King James worshipped in St. Nicholas' Church. The Bishop of Durham preached. "Monday His Majestye bestowed in vewing the toune. The manner and beauty, the bridge and keye, being one of the fayreste in all the north parts. Besides, he released all the prisoners, except for treason, murther, and papistrie, giving sums of money for the release of many that lay for debt. So joyful were the townsmen of His Majesty being there, that they thankfully bare all the charge of his householde during the time of his abode with them."



PART IV.

Apart from the sylvan beauty of the surroundings of Newcastle, there can be no doubt but that the town itself in the early centuries was squalid and possessed few attractions. The habits of the people were simply one remove from the primitive stage. The ever-recurring epidemics of pestilence prove this. Their homes were destitute of decoration and even comfort. This being so, the effect upon the lay mind of the presence of this noble church may be readily imagined. Towering far above and overshadowing the petty two-storeyed dwellings, the church, to these rude fore-elders, would be a very House of God—the embodiment of the Spiritual Church. They would pass from the narrow darksome streets, with their sordid sights and sounds, into the presence chamber of the King. The spacious interior, solemn in the dim light and sense of calm, with its great painted windows flowering out of

the twilit dusk, with the altar gleaming in the distance, and richly robed priests moving silently about in clouds of incense, would strike awe into their spirits; whilst the harmonies of voice and organ that rose and soared through the grey aisles would inspire ideals, and create the hush of holy things. How vivid the contrast to the strife and littleness of their daily lives!

Not only was this Church the witness for God, but it held the cherished memorials of their generations. Here they had married and given in marriage, and their children had been baptised. Here they had consecrated their best to God. In the shadow of its walls their dead were buried. Kings and princes might lie elsewhere, but here the aristocracy of their own firesides lay side by side. When the heat and burden of the day were over, it was the sanctuary and place of refuge—the treasure house, to which the heart turned. From its steeple, in the hour of danger, the signal bell was rung or the beacon blazed, calling them to arm against the foe. Verily, it was the Mother Church of the people of Newcastle.

The Church of St. Nicholas was a loyal representative of the central authority of the civilised world. That marvellous Catholic organisation, which had its origin in the Catacombs, and was cradled among the splendours of pagan idolatry—growing through persecution and martyrdom till the throne of temporal power was within its grasp. The Church claimed undisputed supremacy over all departments of life. Emperors became its vassals and kings its thralls, and their material possessions were exploited for its enrichment. The idea of a theocracy is sublime, but the realisation was too vast and visionary for this world. A universal, triple-crowned, centralising power, holding the keys of heaven, earth, and hell, was more than human nature could brook. Yet for a time the Church had its

hand on the helm of Europe, and, through political upheavals and civil wars, by strategic statecraft guided the destinies of nations.

But great social forces were at work. For years they had been silently moving along the underground channels of national life; coming but rarely to the surface, but gathering potency all the while, till the appointed time had come.

Through the preceding ages, rightly styled the Dark Ages, the Church had reserved all avenues of knowledge. Art, literature, and science were fostered within religious circles for the profit and advantage of the Church exclusively. Instead of widespread culture and education of the masses, there was a policy of repression. Superstition and ignorance were not only tolerated but encouraged, that the supremacy might be the more complete. A blight rested on the people. The stirrings of intellectual aspiration were scorched as by a frost. Men were swathed hand and foot for burial; but men do not die, even though their coffins are made. The Church was called to order. The handwriting was on the wall, and had she been wise and laid aside her claim to the triune diadem, and left temporal matters to temporal rulers—had she taken Martin Luther's programme in an earnest spirit, and reformed the abuses within her borders, her spiritual supremacy might never have been challenged. Had she used her vast wealth and resources to send forth an educated ministry, to enlighten and raise the status of general intelligence, and restore public rights and liberties, the revolt would have been nipped in the bud. Luther did not come as an innovator but as a reformer. He came not to change religion, but to purify it; to apply more strictly the principles of the Founder of Christianity. His ideas might readily have been assimilated without the Church

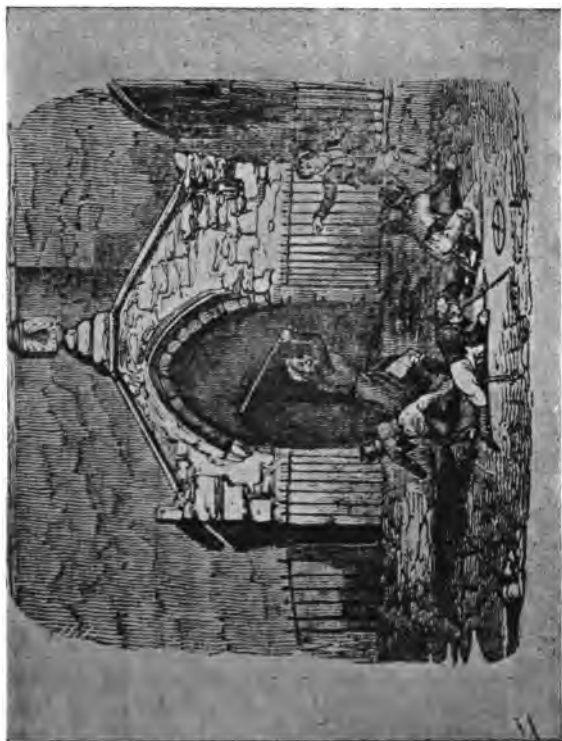
losing one iota of power: rather would she have gained thereby. He denied indulgences and the worship of saints, and reduced the number of sacraments; but never proposed to interfere with the fundamentals of religion. Germany was first in adopting Luther's doctrine, having been already on the verge of separation over the Hussite trouble. The powerful Electors—themselves Lutherans—gladly seized the opportunity of confiscating the estates of the Church, and converting them into private property, thus securing the success of the Reformation at a single stroke.

In 1533, in England the Papal power was broken by Henry VIII. throwing off the yoke and asserting national independence, declaring: "The crown of England is imperial, and the nation a complete body within itself, with a full power to give justice in all cases, spiritual as well as temporal, to all manner of folk, without restraint or appeal to any foreign prince or potentate." This declaration was enforced by Royal command, strengthened by Act of Parliament; but the change could not have been made unless the spirit of reformation had been in the national mind. The statute was the echo of the national conscience. In all that he did, whatever his private character may have been, the King kept his eye on the unity and greatness of his realm, and his finger on the pulse of the times. He exercised his prerogative and divine right by sweeping out of existence all who opposed his will. The country, if it moved at all, must move unitedly. Killing was a small matter. It was the "office of princes to see that the right religion and the true doctrine were maintained and taught."

The repudiation of Rome's authority was absolute, as also was the subordination of the bishops and clergy. The Church was reformed by organised national action, in ac-

cordance with the principles of primitive Christianity—so Churchmen say. Be that as it may: civil power gave expression to the national mind. "No Popery" was the cry, and "No Popery" was the legal verdict. The transition was accomplished through violence and political persecution. Feeling ran very high in the North over the abolition of the monasteries and the confiscation of their wealth for the King's privy purse. These establishments had taken a distinctive place during the barbarous ages, and served a noble end. Within their walls Learning had kept her books safe and the lamp burning; and here was carved a Madonna or a crucifix, a missal was painted, and history composed a legend. No wonder indignation was expressed at their suppression, especially in Newcastle, where there were so many, and where the adhesion to the ancient faith was strong. The proscribed religion had deep root in the affections of our townsmen in those troublous times.

Men paid a big price for their religious opinions in those days: prison, stake, and heavy fines being general. Whatever the church services might be, the people were commanded to attend, under a penalty of one shilling for each omission; and if they ventured to speak against the Prayer Book—first offence, six months' imprisonment; second offence, one year; and third offence, life. To mention the Pope's supremacy was to be guilty of high treason: if a man, he should be hanged, cut down alive, his breast and stomach sliced open, his heart still palpitating be drawn out, and then while yet warm his limbs should be hacked off, dipped in boiling pitch, and exposed over the town gates on the spikes; but, if a woman, she should be burnt alive. The rack and the cross stood side by side, to convince men of the realities of the Christian faith. Three priests suffered the extreme penalty of the law in Newcastle; but in a general way the persecution was mild



SOUTH PORCH OF ST. NICHOLAS'.



here compared to elsewhere. The old Catholicism lay like a sigh in men's hearts. It was the faith of their fathers, and they loved it with a blind devotion. So obstinate was this devotion that itinerant preachers were employed from Germany to convert, if possible, their zeal to the new cause. John Knox took service first at Berwick, then at Newcastle, advocating with great fervour the principles of the Reformation. In 1530, he began to preach in St. Nicholas' Church, and held the appointment for about two years; but he was too vigorous against the Papacy and things Catholic. He declaimed against the show and ceremony of the episcopacy in such a fashion that he was summoned before the Bishop of Durham. Of him the then Earl of Northumberland wrote to the Secretary of State—"And forder, I have thought good to putt you and so my Lords in memory that some order be taken for Knokks, otherwise you shall not avoyd the Scottes from out of Newcastle, which all things consydered my thinke sholde not be forgotten." But Knox went his way, protesting and refusing to be conciliated, and indignantly declining honours, lest they would tempt him to serve the Antichrist. The individual liberty, the free inquiry, and the appeal to Scriptures, which Luther had inaugurated, found ready response in Scotland and in the Welsh principality. Penry held that wherever a body of Christians were met together for worship, a church was constituted, and had a right to manage its own affairs. He died for his conviction, as did Barrow and Greenwood: but the foundation of the Congregational Church was laid.

Protestants and Catholics suffered alike. Those for the Pope were hanged; those against him were burnt. Naturally such proceedings failed to increase the love of those unhappy religionists for the reigning power. Images and other Catholic ornaments were hidden away, ready to be

produced at a favourable turn of events. This happened in the reign of Mary; and the ancient worship was fully re-established, and likewise followed a terrible retribution on those who had persecuted. Every torture that devilish ingenuity could invent was called into exercise. Then the pendulum swung again, and though the Catholic body rallied round its chief, and remained unbroken to this day, they never regained ascendancy.

Throughout this brief sketch an endeavour has been made to show how intimately the history of the Church of St. Nicholas and that of Newcastle are identified. It would almost appear as if the church were the soul of the town, with the blood of human activities pulsing through its fabric. The fortunes of each were intricately interwoven.

When the Scots entered the town in 1640, they vented their fanaticism upon what remained of papal decoration and ornament. A worthy stonemason—Cuthbert Maxwell by name—seeing the destruction in process at St. John's, ran in all haste to St. Nicholas' and All Saints', and managed to get the fonts removed and hidden before the Scots appeared on the scene. To his spirited action the preservation of the beautiful font in St. Nicholas' is due. On the Sunday after the triumphal entry the chiefs of the army worshipped in St. Nicholas', and Henderson, the celebrated Presbyterian divine, preached the sermon, and called down the blessing of God upon their achievements. The Scots had come to stay, for the town was under their rule, with a garrison of 2,000 men, for twelve months.

During the great political agitation and division, the North remained exempt, and steadily adhered to the Royal cause.

In 1644, began the historic siege of Newcastle, which continued with varying phases for nine weeks. The Scottish general, to bring matters to a head, threatened to de-

molish the spire of St. Nicholas'; but the mayor of the town was equal to the occasion. He sent up what Scottish prisoners he had to the lantern, and then defied the Scottish army to do their worst. The spire was saved. Our townsmen offered a desperate resistance to the invaders, and made many a fierce onslaught; but the walls were beaten down near St. Andrew's Church, and the town was taken.

The people of Newcastle are thus described by one of the besiegers—"The richest or better sort of them, as seven or eight Common Knights, Aldermen, Coale Merchants, Pudlers, and the like creatures, are altogether Malignants, most of them being Papists, and the great part of all I should say irreligious Atheists: the vulgar condition being a masse of silly ignorants—live rather like to the Berdoans in Libya than like to wel disposed Christians, Pliable to Religion, civill order, or Church discipline." What the Scots got as their share of the plunder of the town "was of small benefite—bed cloaths, linnings, tanned leather, calve skins, men and women's apparell, pans, potts, and plates, and such like common things." "When I consider," said Lithgow, "the malicious obstinacie of Newcastle, and thereupon the storming of it, I am ravished with admiration to behold how in the heat of blood and goaring slaughter that they got so soon mercie and quarter, that methinketh there was not the like mercie shewne in such a case since the Deluge of the World—nay and (alas) shewne unto an impenitent and pernicious people." The day after the siege was over, being Sunday, Oct. 20, General Lesley and his staff repaired to St. Nicholas' to hold a thanksgiving service, which was conducted by the Rev. Pastor Master Robert Dowglas. Verily, those grim grey walls have beheld many a strange sight. Could stone or timber find voice, what a history would be given of an almost forgotten past

—a past at once tragic, pathetic, and romantic, and replete with thrilling incidents.



PART V.

Much has been written of "the Church of New-castle-upon-Tyne." Ancient documents have been studied, old deed chests have been ransacked, and ancient histories consulted. Yet the full story has not been told. Within its walls are stored the records of a thousand years. From a shield of arms, a badge or a rebus depicted on a painted window, there flashes upon us an otherwise illegible page of the past. An inscription on a monument, a bit of carving on an out-of-the-way stone, and even a stone defaced, oftentimes supplies the link which makes history continuous, and perpetuates for all time the names and memories of the good and great.

If thought is eternal, then is this church sacred with the thoughts and aspirations of kings, queens, and nobles; the heart searchings and longings of saints, martyrs, and priests; and the humbler emotions of the rank and file of local worthies. Beneath its roof, what a cloud of wit-

nesses to the certainties of religion! It is the whispering gallery where are heard echoes not only from the days of yore, but from beyond the veil.

"This is God's house: I feel His mighty breath,
And hear His music, though no words He saith."

Other cathedrals had been despoiled of their ornaments and wrecked. Parish churches had been purged of their images and relics. But such was the local sentiment—loyalty to the Papacy and pride in the church—that she passed the troublous times unscathed. The rood loft, dating back to 1435, when the choir was fitted with new stall work, was suffered to remain till 1639, when the vicar was informed that "His Majesty hath commanded that the gallery which obstructs the chancel should be removed." The screen stood till 1783. In 1635, stalls filled the nave, and the church possessed a fine pulpit and massive sounding board, all in the prevailing Renaissance style.

Charles I., who had thrown himself upon the protection of the Scottish army, was held a prisoner in Newcastle, and as such often attended divine service at St. Nicholas'. He sought to conciliate the crabbed Presbyterians by close attention to their preachers; but they were not to be won over. He was boldly reproached for his bad government by one Scottish preacher; and after the sermon the 52nd Psalm was announced. Congregational singing had long been in vogue. It vexed the mass priests and the devil, and made the sacred discourses sink deeply into the minds of all. The Psalm begins—

"Why dost thou, tyrant, boast abroad,
Thy wicked works to praise?"

Whereupon the King stood up and called for the 56th Psalm—

"Have mercy, Lord, on me, I pray,
For man would me devour."

The congregation, in sympathy with dethroned majesty, sang the Psalm which the King had selected, which shows, despite their faults, our forefathers had their hearts in the right place.

In 1648, Oliver Cromwell passed through the town on his way to Scotland, and in pursuit of the Royalists; and again, on his return, he and his men were "received with great acknowledgments of love." Two years later, during his victorious tour in Scotland, he secured many prisoners, 6,000 of whom he sent south by way of Alnwick and Morpeth to Newcastle. They were penned in the inner ward of Alnwick Castle, and starved for eight days. 3,000 died under this treatment. On coming through Morpeth the survivors were turned loose into a large garden, where the miserable Scots eat all the cabbages, leaves, and roots they could get hold of. This brought on a plague, from which scores of them died by the wayside, on the march, and in St. Nicholas' Church, where they were huddled overnight, only about 1,000 reaching Durham alive.

In those old days there were strange doings in our good town. Religion and superstition went hand in hand—one the evil shadow of the other—and led to very cruel and fanatical excess. Sorcery and witchcraft became the objects of active abhorrence. The Council was petitioned to bring all with leanings towards the black arts to trial. The law in 1655 stood that "all who covenant with a familiar spirit be punished with death." Witchcraft was an offence against civil and religious authority, by voluntary compact with the devil. Coke defined "a witch, a person which had conference with the devil, to consult with him to do some act." A person famously skilled in the science of distinguishing a true witch was brought from Scotland, and paid twenty shillings a head for all he could condemn. The magistrates, as was the custom, sent the bellman through

the town, proclaiming that "all people that would bring in any complaint against any woman for a witch, they should be sent for and tried by the person appointed." Thirty women were accused, and brought into the Town Hall, where they were publicly examined in a manner the most shockingly indecent. The witchfinder identified fourteen witches and one wizard as children of the devil. These were executed on the Town Moor. Their names will be found in the register of St. Andrew's Church. In the Gateshead parish books we find traces of the same diabolical dealings. "Paid at Mrs. Watson's, when the Justices sate to examine the witches, 3s. 4d.; for a grave for a witch, 6d.; for trying the witches, £1 5s."

When the diviner of witches had done his work in Newcastle he went into the county, where he got some three pounds apiece for detection. Henry Ogle laid hold of him to answer the Sessions; but he escaped over the Border, where he was caught, tried, and executed. On the gallows he confessed to having been the death of two hundred and twenty women, at much profit to himself.

Late in the year 1675, a dreadful pestilential disease disease raged in Newcastle, whereby 924 persons died. "The jolly rant" was the name of this plague. Let us for our edification call up an eyewitness of the horrors of those times—imaginary, of course, but historically correct.

"My name is Hosea Hinkleter, and a good old Newcastle one it is, as may be proven to this day—for is it not set forth on the stone in the graveyard of St. Andrew's Church? But that is neither here nor there, and concerneth not my story. You want to hear of the plague. I well remember that night. It was a Saturday. I had sallied forth to see the fun of the market, for many droll fellows were there, bandying jests with the passers-by. All kinds of provisions were laid out on the shambles and in the

booths, and the townsfolk were crowding about in the flare of the lamps and lanterns, picking up their bargains in flesh, fowl, or fish, and other oddments that might be in request. In and out among the housewives and maidens, staithmen, hoastmen, and keelmen hurried with their purchases, anxious to be at home. The air was full of noises: the rattle of waggons, the 'buy, buy, buy' of the sellers, the shrill voices of the women, and the buzz and laughter of the throng. It was a merry sight. Sometimes a minstrel would tarry till his song was sung, or a quack would extol the virtues of his panacea, or a couple of roysterers would come to blows over that which neither of them knew much about. Then the watch would march them off, and threaten them with the drunkard's cloak on the morrow. One thing amused me vastly. A scold, taking advantage of the meekness of her good man, began to rate him in the open street, telling him roundly what she thought of him. He bore her tongue quietly for some time; then he lost all patience and seized hold on her and bore her bodily over to the pant and dropped her in. She, however, proved too much for him, for she dragged him in along with her. Certes! there was a to-do before things were put to rights. The man vowed he would have her head in the branks. Towards the close of the market the uproar increased. Buyers were scarce, and hucksters were eager to clear, and the apprentices became unruly and caused much offence, and were like to have been locked in the Tower—but for a sudden change that came over the temper of the crowd. The noises faded away and the laughter, and men's faces became pale and horror-stricken. Had I not known that at this hour the gates were closed and the watch on the walls, I would have thought that the Scots were upon us, and even now were sacking and burning our homes. But

this I knew could not be so. What then was the cause of this strange change? Like shadows the people stole away, and were lost to sight up and down the street. Some of the stalls were quickly folded up; others were left standing. The owners had departed, and the lights were left to burn out. Even taverns and coffee houses were deserted. Some strange wizardry was in the air, and, almost without hearing of it, the people knew its portent. It was, the Pest—that dread foe, which spared neither old nor young.

“‘Hast heard the news?’ I cried, as I hastened up the Bigg Market, to a watchman who was known to me.

“‘By the rood, an’ it were not bad to know, for the folk who have passed this way, methinks, look as if they had stared in the visage of Death himself. They say it is from Holland or some such place across the sea.’

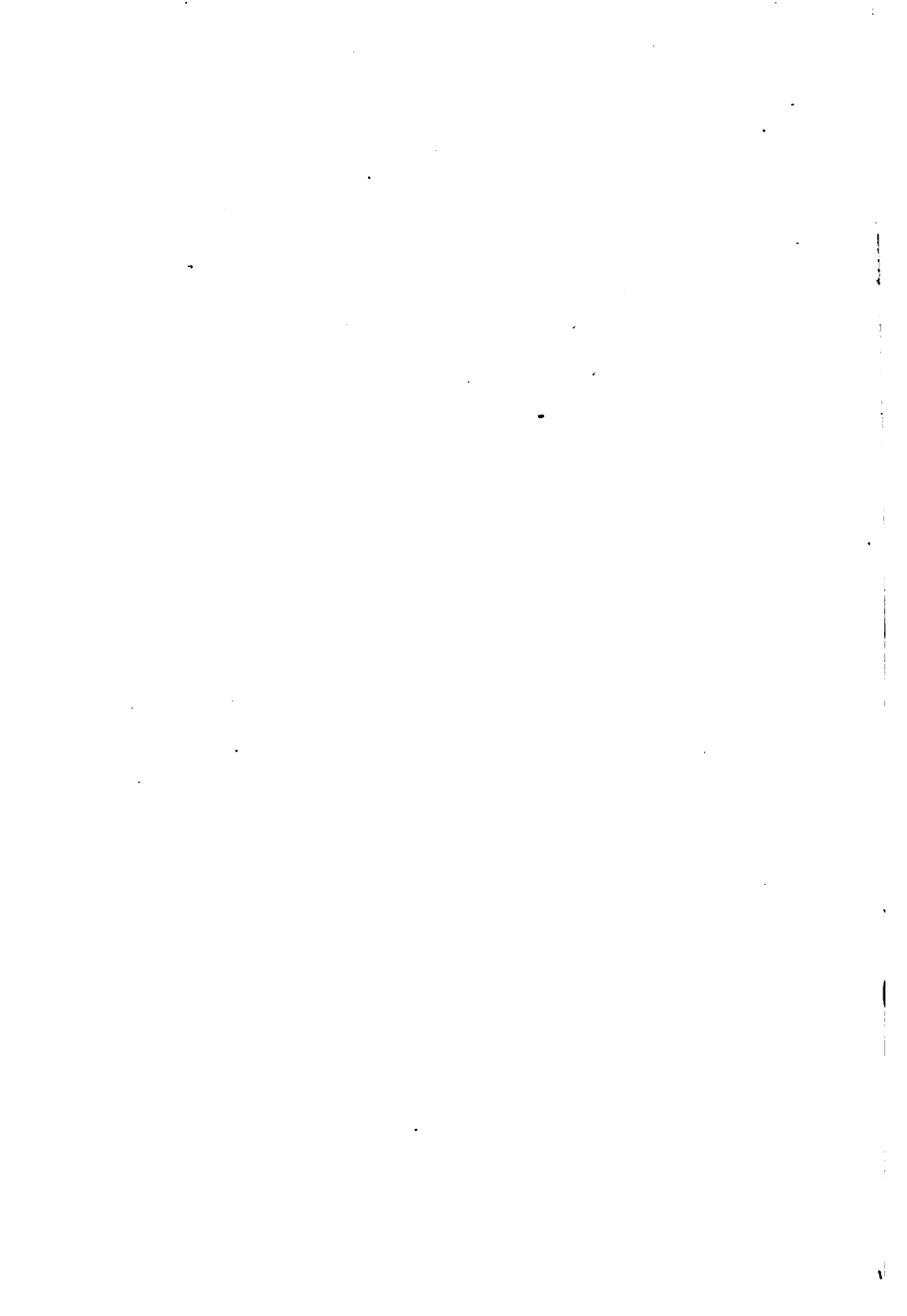
“The night was dark and hot and scarcely breathable, and foul smells rose from the ground and assailed the nostrils. The pest was already abroad. Within ten paces of our own house, I fell heavily over an obstruction which lay across the footpath, and was like to have hurt myself grievously. Putting forth my hand, I chanced upon that which made me draw back with a shudder. It was a dead man. ‘Hang out the lights! Hang out the lights!’ I shouted lustily, when the casements were thrown open and lanterns shewn. I made out the man to be a sailor, both by his *queue* and his attire. This was but the beginning. Ere the foul evil was spent, there was many a stricken home, and the buriers did much gruesome work. Much more could I tell, but I am summoned hence.”

Visitations such as this coming ever and anon, kept the people close to the Church, and to the Church’s God. The unseen had to be shorn of some of its terrors, and Deity to be propitiated by worship and gifts. Human



THE BRANKS.

DRUNKARDS CLOAK.



sense grasped at shreds of comfort by securing for the soul a place in the spiritual city—as one might say, “I grant this gold to the Church forever, to secure the salvation of my soul, the soul of my father, and the soul of my wife, and the souls of my ancestors.” Thus the premium was paid, and the matter irrevocably settled.

Newcastle was no longer the united religious community it once had been. We read that in 1677 the magistracy of our town was “composed of Papists and Protestants, conformists and nonconformists. The cap, the mace, and the sword were one day carried to the Church, another day to the mass house, and on a third to a dissenting meeting house.” Whilst the nobles were chasing their small ambitions, and entangling themselves in political intrigues, tradesmen, mechanics, and tillers of the soil were asserting their rights. The plebeian element was becoming a force not to be confined to gabled and cross-timbered houses. Each new meeting-house became a landmark in the progress of religious thought.

The Corporation of Newcastle, all through its annals, has had an interest in the Church of St. Nicholas. In 1676, we find a municipal vote of £300 towards a new organ, and in 1710 a further grant of £200 for furnishing, cleaning, and repairing it. In 1814 again another £500 towards the same object, and in 1824 £70 or £80 more. The Church, it would appear, was a perpetual charge on the town, for the common council was responsible for the reparation of the steeple. In 1645, and again in 1723, and many times before and since, handsome contributions have been given towards its upkeep.

The steeple is 193 feet 6 inches high. It is on record that a royal mail coach driver, for a wager, threw a stone over the highest pinnacle, and did it easily.

On Oct. 10, 1727, St. Nicholas' Church was the scene of

an imposing ceremony, to celebrate the coronation of George II. The day was ushered in with the ringing of bells. The magistrates, in their scarlet gowns, accompanied by the common council, clergy, and gentry, went from the Guild Hall to Church, with music playing and cannon firing, and from thence proceeded to the Mayor's house, where a splendid entertainment was provided for them; and after dinner they repaired to the Market Place, where a fountain was erected which ran wine; where the magistrates and their following drank the healths of the King, Queen, and royal issue, thence to the Guild Hall, where the ceremony was repeated. The conduit ran wine all the time for the populace, whilst a great fire in the Market Place was burning, the cannon firing after each health. A ball was held in the evening, which concluded with rejoycings, bonfires, illuminations, ringing of bells, and all other demonstrations of joy."

St. Nicholas' Charity School was founded by Mrs Eleanor Allan, in 1703, but not opened till four years later, when 40 boys and 20 girls were enrolled on the books, and the parishioners entered into an annual subscription to clothe the scholars. Subsequent legacies placed the institution on a broader basis. In 1787, on a site given by the Corporation in the Manor Chare, new schoolrooms were built, which served for educational purposes until the day of their utility had passed.

St. Nicholas' Poorhouse was in Gallowgate, and afterwards at the head of the Long Stairs, where an average of forty inmates was maintained at a cost of 3/9½d per head per week, but the dietary of this establishment was reputed to be inferior to that of other parish houses.



PART VI.



rawing near to the close of the eighteenth century, we get into touch with the modern spirit. Change is in the air. Hitherto the expansion and progress of municipal life have gone on conservative lines: each new movement not a departure, but a natural outcome. Now, however, commercialism, with its lack of sentiment and of reverence for antiquity, began to fashion other conditions, and the doom of the old, because it was old, was settled. Much that was picturesque still lingered; the town gates and walls, the fairs and markets, old customs and quaint functions, were relics of the linking years. It is at these old pictures we have been looking. From the archives of the dead and gone, we have pieced together a series of presentments of life and manners of early Novocastrians. As in a historical panorama, the vivid movements of their lives have appeared: their deeds of valour set forth, their troubles and triumphs depicted, and their interests and concerns wrought out. In a great scene, full

of colour and mystery, we have witnessed the pressure of a Divine idea upon the unwilling minds of men, which changed the inward heart, but left the face the same, and humanity exchanged despair for hope, for God had made Himself known. Verily, ours have not been "obsolete lamps, whose light no time recalls." All through our quest into the story of St. Nicholas', we have had gleams and hints and echoes of the Eternal, working in and through the affairs of men. As foreshadowed in the old religions, God descends and tabernacles with His children.

The bells of Time are ringing the changes. The old is going; but it goes slowly, as if loth to go from the scene of long occupation. The great bell of St. Nicholas' still tolls as a signal for burgesses to convene and nominate, assemble and elect, on guild days, and on days for electing magistrates and the mayor. On Shrove Tuesday, when the bell tolls at noon, shops are immediately shut up, and all kinds of business cease. A little carnival ensues, at which the pent-up humour of the apprentices finds outlet.

Within the walls twenty-six watchmen, and without thirty, keep the peace of the night inviolate for half-a-guinea per week, and a guinea bonus at the end of the season, if they have been of seemly behaviour. These men are provided with a warm cape and coat, a lanthorn, a rattle, and a stick with an iron hook at the end, to catch stray pigs, with which the town abounds. Their duty was from ten at night till six in the morning, to call out the hour and the state of the weather: "Twelve o'clock, and a frosty night," and look after roysterers. "Charlies," they were nicknamed.

The population of Newcastle in 1781, calculated by the window cess, was about 30,000, living in 2,389 homes. In 1821, the four parishes of the town contained 3,144 houses, and 43,177 inhabitants. During seventy years, the deaths

of fifty men and women are recorded, at ages varying from one hundred up to one hundred and twenty-three, which, all things considered, is fair evidence for sobriety and health and absence of worry. Ladies of condition were carried through the streets in Sedan chairs by footmen, and, if at night, preceded by a linkboy. Mail coaches, with guards armed with dangerous blunderbusses, came dashing into the town from north and south, putting up at the big inns, of which there were many.

There was great excitement in Newcastle when Mosley Street was lit with gas. This was in 1818. Previously, darkness was made visible by 750 oil lamps. The gas, once introduced, soon extended to other parts of the town; but the company declined to lay pipes in Carliol Street, Erick Street, and Stowell Street, so 21 lamps were required for these streets.

Newcastle was a mighty place in those days, and a great wonder to the rural populations, who came within the walls on rare occasions to see the sights and make bargains—hinds and shepherds from the north and from Tynedale, who would gaze upon the fortifications with open-mouthed amazement. According to Mackenzie, they would “see a well-informed and polite people. In public life, calm and dignified and unostentatious: not a wealthy set, for few can make a rapid fortune here. Hence, the insolent, vulgar, purse-proud upstarts that swarm in some parts are almost unknown here.” Our country cousins would see women labourers working to bricklayers and slaters, mounting high ladders and crawling over the tops of houses, and otherwise making themselves generally useful. Armed and masked highwaymen and footpads infested the turnpike roads, and committed their depredations, till caught; and, after trial, they would be conveyed, bound in a cart seated on a coffin along with a procession behind, to execution, either

outside Westgate or up through Gallowgate to the Town Moor. The hanging made a rare holiday spectacle. Good old times these, when executions were public and frequent, and for trifling offences. A man went about doing wrong with the fear of death before his eyes. Still good old times, when one might open an upstairs window and empty a pail without regard to passers-by, or when an enemy could be slain by dropping a creaking sign on his head, and not much said about it either: it was not so mortal a crime as stealing nine yards of ribbon.

But, alas! the change came. Utility was inexorable. The walls were barring the town's energies. The gates were shutting out trade and traffic. Both must go. These sturdy pioneers of the industries of Newcastle were self-willed and resolute. The walls were removed, and the gates and towers were cast down. Burns and denes were arched over, and street plans were carried out. Of the authorities an old ballad has it:

"Their foolish pride there's none to stop,
Improvement's all the go.
Unseemly's everything that's old,
So all that's old's laid low."

St. Nicholas' steeple was about the only surviving landmark. The interior of the church was "restored" very severely. The timber-work of the old church had been preserved almost intact; and, says Brand, "afforded a spectacle of extraordinary magnificence," prior to the outbreak of "restoration." William Pollard, baker; Thomas Sander-son, flax dealer; Anthony Johnson, hatter; and Thomas Greenwell, tallow chandler and salmon pickler, churchwardens, met in solemn council, and deliberately decreed that the finely-carved wood-work of the nave and the choir be sold by auction or otherwise dispersed. The rood screen was ruthlessly hacked to pieces. The pulpit was treated as lumber,



INTERIOR OF ST. NICHOLAS' 1787.



and passed through various phases ere it was transformed into a sideboard for Sir R. S. Hawks, of Clavering Place.

Many of the old tombstones were sold for building material, and a stone coffin found within the church shared the same fate; and, the old historian mourns, "the money never appeared in the churchwardens' accounts." "The alterations were completed with great taste and elegance, but the antiquary must forever lament the alterations, as almost all ancient funeral monuments have been destroyed." The exquisite carvings, which had passed the ordeal of puritanical fanaticism; the interior, made sacred by the worship of a continuous stream of generations, and perfected by the half unconscious striving of local genius through several centuries, was "restored" out of existence by four Vandals, aided and abetted by subscribers. The Mother Church of Newcastle Town was shorn of its glory.

"In the elder days of Art,
Builders wrought with greatest care
Each minute and unseen part,
For the gods see everywhere."

By dwarfs of narrow mould and mind, a typical parish church was made into "a sort of cathedral," and the irony of it is that their names are remembered, whilst those of the builders and workers in wood have passed into oblivion. Not all the monuments have disappeared. The Hall and Maddison memorials still remain, though mutilated by the improvements afore-mentioned; also a few others of simpler form, and the recumbent figure of "a warre like gentleman," a crusader, supposed to represent Peter de Manly, a baron of Richard II.'s reign, who took upon him "the crosse for sacred warre-fare."

Among the treasures possessed by the church are the old registers, dating from 1558, and the churchwardens' ac-

counts, from 1683. A few extracts from each may be of interest :—

1575. Roberte, the Sotherne man, bur. 11 March.
 1580. A prisoner in the High Castle, bur. 20 May.
 Cuthbert Ewbank's wench, bur. 1 Oct.
 Mr Ra'ph Pharand, a strainger, lying at Clement Anderson's, bur. 23 Oct.
 1581. A Dutchman, lying at Edward Suerties, his house' bur. 19 Jan.
 1582. Robert Stott, a kinesman of Tho. Stott's, merchaunte, was lost in the water of Tyne, bur. 9 Sept.

FROM THE ACCOUNTS.

1683.	For ye Beadle's 2 pair of hose . . .	5s. od.
	For scooreing ye plate and pewter . . .	1s. od.
	For ye Beadle's 2 pair of showes . . .	10s. od.
	For ringing ye Sarmon Bell . . .	2s. 6d.
1684.	Paid for watching ye Church yard . . .	3s. od.
	Paid for erbs and fflowes for Mr Maior's pew, 2 times	3s. od.

The entries are all very quaint and whimsical, and well worth perusal.

Behind the reredos is a large painting, a gift to the church in 1818, by Sir Matthew White Ridley, representing our Lord washing the disciples' feet, by Tintoretto, and two smaller pictures, "The Adoration of the Magi" and "The Flight into Egypt," given in 1879, by Mr. Hugh Taylor, of Chipchase Castle. The vestries contain a few old portraits, engravings, and paintings. Among them is a view of the old vicarage, which stood between St. John's Church and the Assembly Rooms, in a pleasant and secluded situation, with a neat grass plot and shrubbery in front and a garden behind. The house was almost entirely destroyed by the Scots in 1644. The Common Council agreed, in 1649, "to save harmlesse Dr. Robert Jennison from dilapi-

dations concerning the vicarage house." It was rebuilt and subsequently enlarged, and "was very grand and stately." The Vicar's Pump stood in front of the house.

The church has also a folio MSS. of the Scriptures, of the thirteenth century—the Hexham Bible—which, though sadly mutilated, displays beautifully illuminated initials and careful work.

Previous to 1761, the burial ground must have been much larger, as at this date it was contracted and levelled and made into a decent approach to the church. Later, the brick parapet and wooden paling were replaced by a dwarf stone wall and iron railing. In 1827, the steeple shewed signs of shrinking, and had to be bound with iron, which made it secure, but only for a year or two, for in 1832 the tower began to lean towards the south. The laying of sewers and the digging of graves had sapped the foundations. These were laid bare, and underset with stone, and thus disaster was averted. The south porch was added; and, two years later, the north porch was renewed. Thirty years later, the north side of the tower had to be underset, and various repairs, costing in all £8,000, had to be carried out. In 1873, the interior of the church underwent an exhaustive renovation, at a cost of £21,400, which left the church as we now know it, with the exception of the reredos and choir stalls, and details of a scheme designed by Mr R. J. Johnson, and begun in 1887. The reredos, which, it is said, is suggestive of St. Alban's and Winchester altar screens, is of Uttoxeter marble, and cost £4,000, which was defrayed by Mr Percy Westmacott. Besides the scriptural figures, and that of the patron saint of the church, are figures of St. Oswald, the Venerable Bede, St. Aidan, St. Benedict Biscop, St. Edwin, St. Wilfrid, and St. Paulinus. The richly-carved woodwork, a creation in which grace and strength are united, is strictly in keeping with the

severe style of the chancel, and in accord with ecclesiastical traditions, was executed by Mr Ralph Hedley, and splendidly upholds his craftsmanship and artistic feeling.

1882 saw the partition by Parliament of the ancient diocese of Durham, and the widely-expressed ambition of Newcastle was gratified. She ranked as a city, and a bishop's throne was set up in a typical parish church. To bring this about a fund was established, which called forth the liberality of north-country magnates to an extraordinary extent. The necessary endowment was completed in a very short time—the bishop's palace being given by Mr J. W. Pease, of Pendower. All being ready, the Royal mandate was issued on May 17, 1882, by Her Majesty Queen Victoria.

Order in Council.

1. The Bishopric of Newcastle is hereby founded.
2. The diocese of the said bishopric shall consist of the county of Northumberland and the counties of the towns of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Berwick-upon-Tweed, and to include such detached parts of any other county as are under any Act of Parliament to form part of the county of Northumberland, or have been or can be transferred to the county of Northumberland, by the Justices in General or Quarter Sessions assembled; and shall include the ancient common law parish of Alston, with its chapelries, in the Parish of Alston.
3. The parish church of St. Nicholas, at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, subject to the rights of the patron and incumbent of such church, shall be the Cathedral Church.
4. The Bishop of Newcastle is constituted a body corporate, and is hereby vested with all such rights, privileges, and jurisdictions as are possessed by any other bishop in England, and is subjected to the metropolitan jurisdiction of the Archbishop of York.

5. This order shall come into operation on the publication of the same in the *London Gazette*.

The royal charter was received by the mayor on July 5, and straightway the city began its existence, and assumed its ecclesiastical dignities under the spiritual oversight of the Right Reverend Ernest Roland Wilberforce, D.D. Thus, after after an interval of a thousand years, the Northumbrian see was re-established.

On Thursday, November 6, 1902, a notable service was held within the old walls of St. Nicholas', which will be repeated annually—"The Commemoration of Founders, Benefactors, and Worthies of the Diocese of Newcastle and of the Cathedral Church of Saint Nicholas, who have entered into rest." The noble dead whose names are enshrined within the sacred edifice will thus be held in perpetual remembrance, as an inspiration for posterity, and in recognition of their benefactions and self-sacrifice.

Together the reader and the writer have gone over a vast stretch of years. To many the events and scenes sketched may be familiar as an oft-told tale, but to some the curtain which hung over a picturesque period will have been lifted, and they will have seen for the first time the environment and conditions under which Newcastle has grown to its present importance and dignity. In its strife and struggle for existence, it has developed that sturdy independence for which it is noted the world over. Its sons have gone forth with characters that won honour and renown to the ends of the earth, and brought credit to the banks of Tyne. In the formation of those influences which make for manhood, the Mother Church has played a notable part. She has consecrated commerce and industry, and spiritualised the commonplaces of life. Men, for the love of the spirit which rests within the old-time shrine, have done deeds of daring, and lived lives

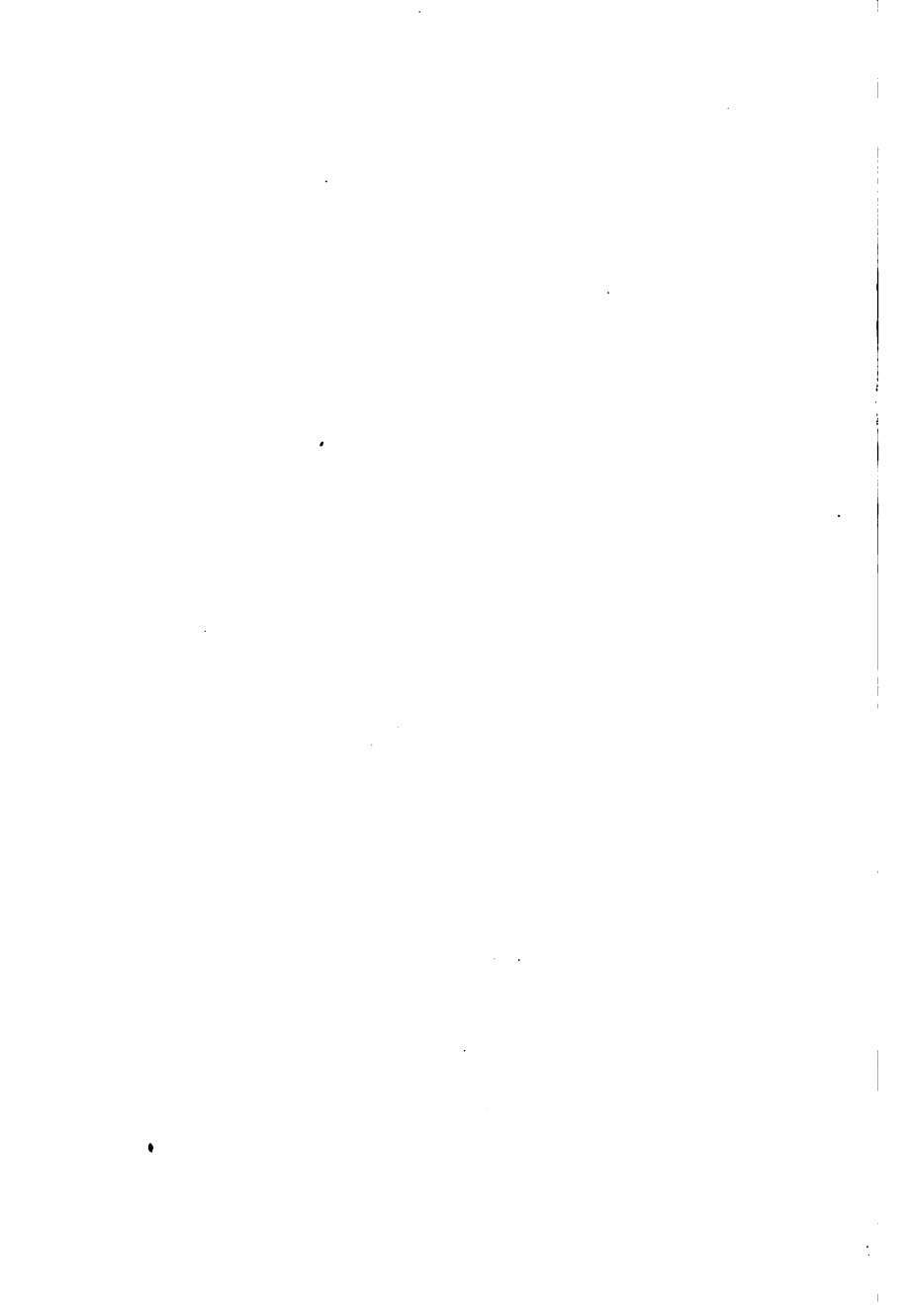
of sacrifice. The brasses which adorn the walls, and the dusty banners which hang in tatters from the roof, tell but a tithe of what has been done. Many a glorious victory, of which history is dumb, and many a nameless hero has been inspired by thoughts born in the atmosphere of her aisles. They shall be known when the Books are opened, and the ministry of the Church of St. Nicholas will be realised to the full.

This brief sketch has drawn to a close. The pen is laid aside with regret, for the gathering together of materials has been a pleasant task, and, however crudely the work has been done, the hope is expressed that interest in our past history has been awakened, and, even if for a short time, the thoughts of the reader have been diverted from the stress of business to those things of deep and spiritual importance, for which stands as a solemn and enduring witness—

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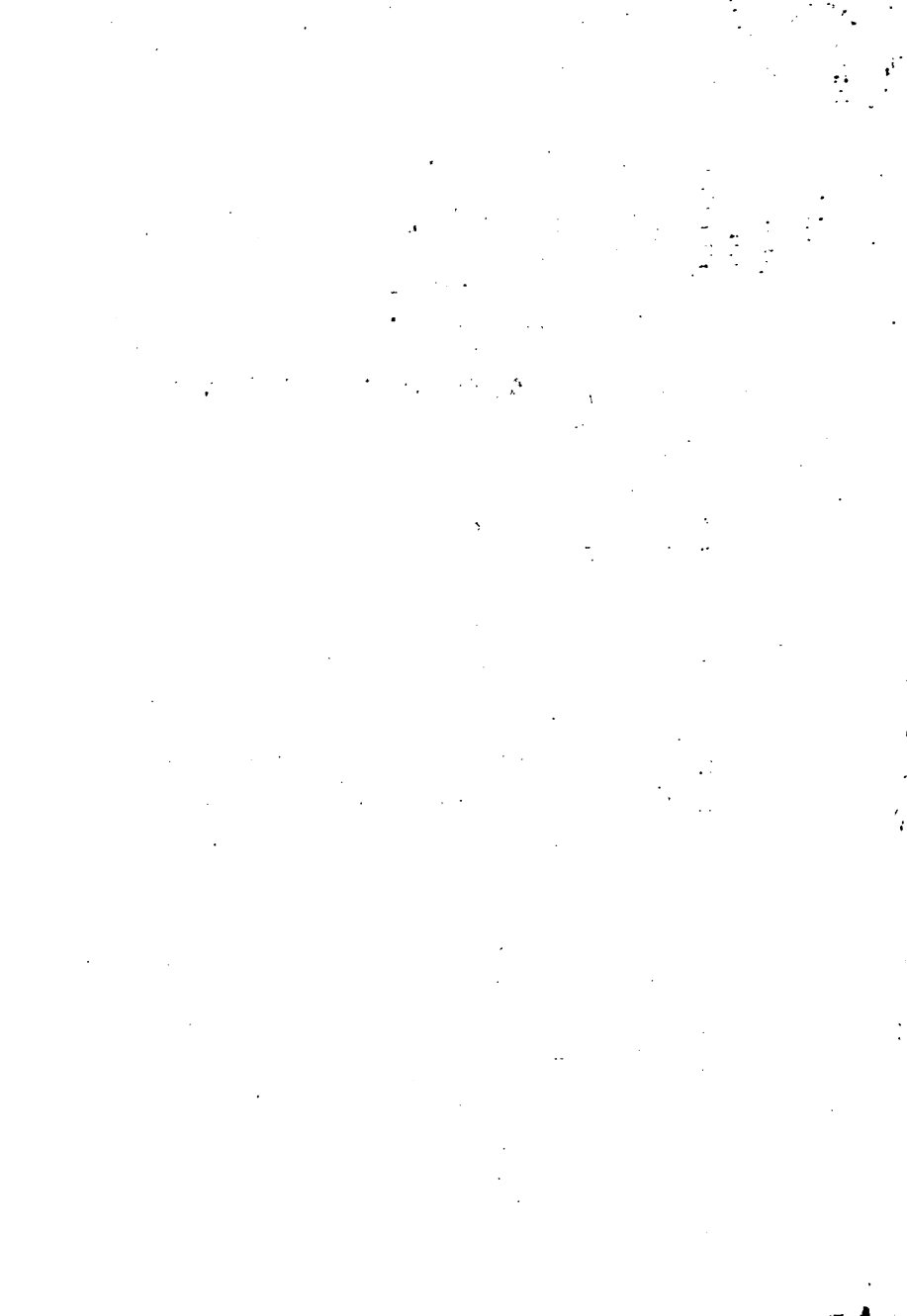
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